

17 November 2006



Cross Country runners Jen Kempers and Chelsey Gerdes lead the Defender Women off the line in the Regionals Cross Country Race November 4 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The race consisted of 14 teams and 128 runners.

Jeremy Westra

Victory for Democrats suggests changes to come

Joel Veldkamp
Staff Writer

November 7 was a great day to be a Democrat. In the United States' congressional elections last week, the Democratic Party swept into power in both houses of Congress, ending years of Republican control and presenting President Bush with the first serious political opposition of his presidency.

The Republican Party had controlled both the White House and Congress since the 2000 elections. The elections last Tuesday marked the end of six years of Republican domination of the government, and the Democrats' joy was palpable. Nancy Pelosi, who will become the new Speaker of the House of Representatives, declared, "Democrats are ready to lead!"

The good news for the party didn't stop with Congress. The Democrats captured a majority of the state governorships in the elections. The day after the elections, President Bush announced the resignation of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, a longtime target of Democrats for his handling of the Iraq War. Later, the

current Republican Speaker of the House, Dennis Hastert, announced that he wouldn't run for a leadership position in the new House.

What's the next move for the Democrats? Nancy Pelosi has announced a "100-hour plan" for the first 100 hours of the new Congress, whose session begins in January. The plan includes raising the minimum wage from \$5.15 an hour to \$7.25 an hour, placing new restrictions on lobbyists, broadening federal funding for stem-cell research, and rolling back portions of President Bush's tax cuts for the wealthy. Bush isn't likely to be thrilled with any of those ideas, but he may not have a choice if he wants to push any of his own legislation through Congress in the next two years. Bush has already indicated that he will sign the minimum wage increase into law.

The election results also diminish Bush's influence in the key area of selecting Supreme Court justices. The two justices Bush has appointed already, John Roberts and Samuel Alito, are unabashed conservatives. If Bush wants the new Democratic Senate to approve his future nominees, he will be forced to pick candidates with more moderate views.

Perhaps the most significant result of the elections will be their impact on the war in Iraq. Many commentators have pointed to the ill turn the war has taken as the chief reason for the Republicans' defeat. As commander-in-chief, President Bush still has broad control over America's military actions in Iraq. But the funding for the war is now in the hands of the Democrats.

Both Pelosi and John Murtha, a contender for House Majority Leader, have expressed support for an immediate American withdrawal from Iraq. Senate Democrats haven't taken that extreme position yet, but many have suggested a "phased withdrawal" from the war-torn nation. In addition, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Bush's longtime ally in Iraq, has announced his intention to step down on May 31 next year. His successor may not be as supportive of the war.

The pressure is on Bush to come up with a winning strategy – and fast. How Bush handles Iraq in the next two years will determine not only his legacy, but America's security and standing in the world for years to come. It remains to be seen whether the Democrats will be his partners or opponents in meeting that challenge.

President-Elect trades war for peace

Chris O'Neill
Staff Writer

Daniel Ortega has returned to power as Nicaragua's newly appointed president, much against the scrutiny of many U.S. government officials who are skeptical of Ortega's professed change of heart.

Many Americans remember Ortega's active involvement in socialist policies during the Cold War era. He is known for having previously served as a leader in the Sandinista National Liberation Front, and also a member of the ruling junta following the conquest and exile of Anastasio Somoza Debayle in 1979. Ortega was elected president in 1985, and served his office until 1990, when he was defeated by Violet Barrios de Chamorro in the presidential election. Ortega was a candidate for the next two elections after that—in 1996 and 2001—but was unsuccessful.

During his previous time in office, Ortega had received much opposition from the U.S. in response to his communist views. Ortega himself was very anti-American and vowed an endless fight against a hos-

tile U.S. However, with his return to power, 61-year-old Ortega declares that he has traded war for peace. Despite Ortega's plea for reconciliation, U.S. officials are hesitant to accept Ortega's claims as sincere. Instead, many fear that his former power-hungry persona may soon resurface as he has been embraced by a group of leftist leaders that oppose American primacy, including Fidel Castro of Cuba.

Ortega favors free education and healthcare, as well as other social democratic policies. Following his victory speech last Wednesday, he led supporters as they sang in unison an old revolutionary song entitled "The People United Will Never Be Divided." In order to emphasize democracy, Ortega asked that citizens send recommendations for appointing cabinet members.

In a press conference last week, Ortega's Vice President Jaime Morales assured the opposing public that in the next five years the world will forget the old Daniel Ortega. "He knows he has made a lot of mistakes," Morales told the Associated Press. "He's honestly regretful. Maybe together we can get people to forgive and forget and move on."

see NICARAGUA pg4

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Donating blood questions answered

Cody Ellens, the Vice President of Student Forum, recently interviewed Cerilyn Elkstrom of the Siouxland Blood Bank about donating blood. Here is that interview.

How important is it that people donate blood? It is essential that people donate blood. Volunteer blood donors are the only way that a blood supply can be obtained. It is not possible to manufacture blood and blood products. Patients that are sick, need surgery or suffered from accidents depend on volunteer blood donors to save their lives. Each product can be divided to help three people.

What is the procedure for donating blood? You can complete the following four easy steps to blood donation in about 45 minute. First, a medical history is done. This is a safety process to ensure that blood only from healthy donors enters the blood supply.

Only people who are not at risk for an infectious disease can give blood. Donors must answer a series of detailed questions about their health and risk for diseases that can be passed through the blood supply. Second, a mini-physical is done, which includes testing your temperature, blood pressure, and pulse to assure that they are within normal limits. Also, a drop of blood is taken from your finger to test your iron levels. To donate whole blood, your iron level must be at least 12.5 Hemoglobin or 38 Hematocrit. You also need to weigh at least 110 pounds. Finally, bring a list of any medi-

cations you may be on and a photo ID.

Does it hurt? Realistically, it is a needle that is going into your arm, but the professionals that work in the health field drawing blood do their best to make it as easy as possible. If you have apprehension about donating and do not like needles, remember that the patient that is receiving the blood transfusion doesn't like needles either, but their life depends on it and they are so thankful to you that you have given this gift to them.

Have you heard about DRC (double red cell) donation? This is a great opportunity for people to donate two units of red blood cells! The process is a bit longer (20 minutes) so you donate a unit of whole blood and it is divided out in a special machine at the site. Your blood is separated into plasma, platelets and red blood cells. You receive back in the same tubing the plasma, platelets and saline solution. We keep the red blood cells. Then the whole process is repeated. In the end, you have donated two units of red blood cells and receive everything back. You do not have any volume loss, like the whole blood donation, as we have infused you with the extra saline solution. This is a huge benefit to donors and patients alike... Donors receive credit for two units and now instead of donating every 56 days, you wait 112 days. For people that have busy schedules and have a tough time getting away to donate, this works great. For the patients, it is a great advantage.

This DRC blood is kept in pairs from the

time it leaves you as a donor, while it is being tested at the blood bank, shipped to the hospitals, and given to the patient. In the hospital, doctors usually order blood in pair-- 4-6 units of packed cells, for example. It is very beneficial to the patients to receive blood from three donors rather than six donors as it decreases the chances of the patient having a reaction. Even though blood is typed and crossed to be a match to the patient, reactions can happen.

In order to do this DRC donation, men must weigh 130 pounds and be 5 ft. 1 inch; women must be 5ft. 5 inches and weigh 150 pounds. Both men and women must have a hematocrit of 40. If you qualify please think DRC Donation.

How do you feel afterwards? about what you have done? and physically? I think there is a mental rush knowing you have just done something that is tremendously going to affect another person's life. Occasionally, we will have donors that will feel faint, and we take care of them if this happens. Usually this occurs because they haven't eaten or drank much that day, or have so much anxiety that it overwhelms them. It's important to remember to relax-you are doing a great thing

Do you have any comments that may help promote the upcoming blood drive? We very much appreciate the opportunity to have a blood drive at Dordt College. It helps save lives in 35 area hospitals that we service, including Sioux Center Community Hospital and Health

Center. It also gives you an opportunity to be a vital part of that. Presently, we are down about 1000 units from the summer and in September alone, about 500 units than what we had anticipated. We are really depending on Dordt College to help this deficit and be back on the level we want to be. Also, we have a contract to supply plasma to the military if needed, and they have contacted us to help supply this as they can not keep up with the blood needs they are experiencing due to the injuries endured by the troops. So, we really need your help to make a difference.

Siouxland Community Blood Bank

invites you to donate blood.

november 16 and 20
west commons
starting at 8am

Please Donate.

Out and about

Jill Hiemstra
Staff Writer

Air Guitar T-shirts?

Scientists announced Monday that they have developed a high-tech T-shirt that turns the strumming of an air guitar into music. "The T-shirt has motion sensors built into its elbows that pick up the wearer's arm motions and relay them wirelessly to a computer which interprets them as guitar riffs," said Richard Helmer, an engineer who leads the research team from the government's Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization. One arm is interpreted as picking chords while the other strums. The "wearable instrument shirt" is adaptable to both right and left-handed would-be rock stars. Helmer says sensors could be used in the future to reproduce a person in the virtual world so they could get feedback on their actions and improve their sporting techniques.

Source: ABC News.

Ok to use cell-slang on tests

New Zealand's high school students will be able to use "text-speak," the mobile phone text message language beloved of teenagers in national exams this year, officials said.

Text-speak, a second language for thousands of teens, uses abbreviated words and phrases such as "txt" for "text," "lol" for "laughing out loud" or "lots of love" and "CU" for "see you." The move has already divided students and educators who fear it could damage the English language.

New Zealand's Qualifications Authority said Friday that it still strongly discourages students from using anything other than full English, but that credit will be given if the answer "clearly shows the required understanding," even if it contains text-speak. Teachers would have concerns if text slang became acceptable in everyday written language in classrooms.

68-year old woman surrogate mom to gorillas

Barb Jones spends her days crawling through piles of straw with a 15-pound baby gorilla on her back, sometimes climbing up on platforms inside the cage. It's all part of being a surrogate mother to baby gorillas, but that doesn't mean it's easy work for the 68-year-old Jones, who's been doing it for 26 years.

"Now, I need a little help scaling the ropes," she said. "But I can't not do what they are going to do."

Jones, a primate nursery keeper at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, works to break the cycle of primates born in captivity who never learn how to care for their offspring. She teaches the young gorillas how to be babies while adult gorillas watch and learn their own roles. The hope is that the babies will grow up to be better caregivers that can look after their own young.

Samsung designs killer robot

Kristina De Graaf
Staff Writer

Samsung is not just making High Definition Televisions and Mp3 players anymore. In a cooperative effort with Korea University, Samsung has developed a "sentry robot" fully equipped with a 5.5mm machine gun, two zoomable cameras and an arguably melodic voice to warn intruders of their impending doom.

With one camera for daytime use and an infrared one for nighttime, Samsung claims its robot can even tell the difference between people, trees and machine guns, a characteristic critics claim to be of little reassurance.

This \$200,000 robot is capable of hunting its enemy from afar and will likely be available for sale sometime next year.

Plans are to set up the machine-gunning robot on the border of North and South Korea.

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GEN-100 advisor "lottery" needs readjustment

Bree Wierenga
Editor

Freshman Jon Nederhoff is aiming for an engineering degree. For his first semester at Dordt, he was assigned Matthew Dressler, assistant professor of engineering, as an advisor and GEN-100 professor. Nederhoff believes his professor/advisor is a great asset to him personally, but not to the members of his PC group who are not engineering majors.

"I think it's good to see the other sides, but if you're dead set on your major then it's not very helpful," Nederhof says. This piece of advice is one Dordt should heed.

Most incoming freshmen are randomly assigned a professor, staff or faculty member as their GEN-100 professor and

advisor. The problem with this method is that most of the freshmen do not receive someone who can fully help them with their intended field of study. The students seem to have a harder time knowing how to plan the rest of their academic lives here at Dordt.

GEN-100 professors do not need to be specialized experts in any area to teach the class. GEN-100 consists of basic college information, Biblical beliefs and the Christian's place in our world. Professors for this class simply need a desire to give the freshmen a good start.

However, are these professors qualified to be advisors to whomever Dordt decides to assign them? How is an agriculture professor able to advise an intended English major on what classes he or she wants (and is even required)

to take, and when to take them, and with whom?

"It would be really helpful to have an advisor in the agriculture department," says freshman Laura Vahrmeyer, who is studying agriculture and whose advisor and GEN-100 professor is Dianne De Wit. "I really like [De Wit]; she's really cool and really helpful like in Dordt life, but not in picking classes."

Is this because De Wit works as a grants coordinator and has nothing to do with the agriculture department whatsoever?

Assigning incoming students to professors, faculty and staff at Dordt is not such a bad idea. This "lottery" takes the weight off of having to hire two or more full-time GEN-100 professors, and then having them yearly deal with about 300

new students amongst themselves. However, when students know what they would like to study at Dordt, the college should immediately make every effort to provide the students with advisors from their intended fields of study. The students could therefore have a GEN-100 professor and a separate advisor who meets their individual needs.

Granted, some departments may get floods of incoming freshmen while others may not. But after the first semester at Dordt, these students would most likely seek out advisors in those departments anyway. In the end, everything would even out as it does now, except students would have a better grasp on what they need to accomplish in four years in their chosen field of study.

From a secretary's point of view . . .

Cindy Groeneweg
Guest Writer

I would like to thank Diane Feucht for her article in a recent issue of the Diamond, entitled, "A Call For Respect." However, the article seemed to imply that no one on campus respects the work maintenance does or that there are certain jobs on campus that maintenance should not be doing. So, although I appreciate Diane's concern for the maintenance department, I would like to share my perspective as secretary in the maintenance office.

Having coffee daily with the housekeeping crew, I am always amazed at their great attitude, even when someone carelessly leaves a big mess for them to

clean up. No, they aren't happy about the mess, but more upsetting to them is the lack of respect they feel when something like this happens.

However, we always comment how a small handful of students can cause this feeling of disrespect and create a lot of extra work for the housekeeping crews. They know that many of the students respect their work and they love getting to know the students as they work in the residential buildings every day. Some students have even collected money for Christmas gifts for their housekeeping staff or made cookies to show their appreciation.

I do hope all the students take to heart Diane's desire for the students to get to know those who care for their buildings.

They reveal daily how much pride they take in their work and how much they enjoy being around the students they meet in the hallways, lounges and even in the bathrooms! In my opinion, they do deserve respect and they certainly have mine!

The other issue that I wanted to comment on after reading Diane's article is the philosophy of the maintenance department. We have a motto in our department, "At Your Service, In HIS Service." This is the philosophy of the maintenance department in a nutshell.

The 22 people that make up the maintenance staff are here to serve everyone in the campus community—faculty, staff and students. As I slide numerous work requests into the maintenance staff mail

boxes on a daily basis, I seldom hear complaints. This is, after all, what maintenance is all about.

All work requests are seen as a way to serve the campus community, whether it means changing a light bulb, setting up tables, building bookshelves, or helping a student jump start their car. They find it rewarding to tackle any project, big or small. Working with all the people in the maintenance department is truly an honour for me and I can say they are some of the most "servant-hearted" people I know.

But then, after all, isn't that what Dordt College is all about? Maintenance is really no different than any other department on campus—we're just all working together for God's glory!

Dordt student attends NCMSLC

Jessie Rieken
Staff Writer

Last weekend, I was given the opportunity to travel with 12 of Dordt's international students to the annual National Christian Multicultural Student Leaders Conference (NCMSLC). This year NCMSLC was hosted in the little town of Cedarville, Ohio, at Cedarville University.

Dordt sends students to this conference every year. On the first day of caucuses I sat in the chapel of Cedarville University with students from more than 20 different Christian colleges and listened to them stand up and say, "Hallelujah, praise God!" More than 12 different languages were spoken. I sat there and wept. God overflowed from my heart, pinching my eyes open a little wider and giving me the realization that we are all Christians created in His image, no matter what country we come from.

This year, NCMSLC focused on racism and how it is still very dominant in the United States today. Dr. Kezia McNeal commented on how racism is socially constructed and how God states that every tribe and nation will come together to worship Him. I found myself remembering God's greatest commandments - love God with your whole heart and love your neighbor as yourself. Why is it that today people can't see Jesus because we are fighting so much?

During this conference I found myself reflecting on something very pressing against my heart. When will God's people finally come together? Are we all going to wait and finally reunite when we get to heaven?

I was struck with the realization that we are the future of the church and must make a difference in changing racism. We are the voice of the church. God states in Galatians 3:28, "... for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Picture Poll

Becky Love and Naomi De Boer

Did you vote? Why or why not?

Rachel Antvelink
"No, I didn't get my registration in time, but I am an advocate for voting."



Jason De Stigter
"Yes, because it's the responsible thing to do."



Steven Oswald
"No, I just forgot."



Jenn Hamrick
"No, because I'm from Wisconsin and I didn't get my absentee ballot."



Jonathan Sims
"No, because I can."

Community effort builds new Dordt sign

Cheryl Korthuis
Staff Writer

Dordt College is getting a face lift. A new sign, coordinating landscaping, and a trail are being constructed on the corner of 7th Street and 4th Avenue. This new area will be "a place of welcoming," says the maintenance team.

The corner lot used to be a water treatment plant for the city. Dordt acquired the corner lot by negotiating with the City of Sioux Center.

The city is planning to make a bike trail around Sioux Center. In order to complete the planned loop, the city needed access through Dordt's campus.

So, they gave Dordt the option to buy the lot from the city, if Dordt would allow the bike trail to go through the land. Dordt and the city agreed, and Dordt began planning in late 2005. "It's a win-win situation for the community and for the college," says maintenance staff's Stan Oordt.

The project is a collaboration of community effort. The money was all donated by Henry Van Kleveren, a lifetime nursery and landscaping man, and also a big supporter of Dordt College. He is one of a group of monetary donors who got Dordt on its feet and continue to share

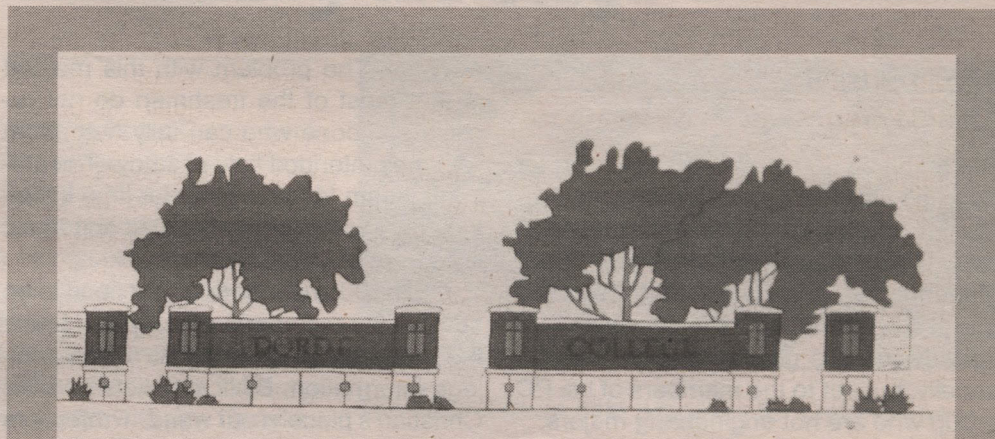
their assets to help Dordt grow.

The layout planning of the new corner was a community effort as well. Maintenance held several open campus forums in the spring of 2006. Dordt students, faculty, and staff were invited to share their opinions and ideas.

John Jacobsen, of Brian and Clark Architects, drew the final plan. The maintenance staff and Arlan Neederhoff, Vice President of Business Affairs, contracted the work for the project. Ken Moeller, who has been in masonry for 35 years, says he and his crew of two will be finishing the brickwork within the next few weeks. The brickwork will match the campus center. The project looked like it was stalled for a while because Moeller was waiting for a pre-cast from a Sioux Falls company.

Professor Chris Goedhart and his greenhouse staff are growing more than 300 plants for the corner, and Dordt is planning to hire vendors in Sioux Center to grow larger plants. The fauna of the corner will include trees, prairie grasses, and some perennial. All the plants will be watered through automatic irrigation. The landscaping is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2007.

There are two bigger signs in the middle. One will say "Dordt" and the other



Dordt College

Plans for the new sign

Who: Maintenance, Horticulture Department, and subcontractors, donators

What: Welcome area with a new sign and landscaping

When: projected completion is Summer 2007

Why: Visitors needed a way to identify the location of Dordt

How Much: \$195,000 (estimated total cost)

"College." The two outer, smaller signs will give directions to main campus buildings such as the BJ Haan, the DeWit Gymnasium, and the Heritage House. These smaller signs have inset crosses which was a suggestion from a faculty member this spring.

The path through the middle signs will be well-lit, and it will go through to the

parking lot.

Dordt's growth will be shown in the plan for campus-wide improvements. The new corner sign is just the first step of four. The next phases will improve the signs between East Hall and the De Wit Gymnasium, and financial supporters are already in line, says John Baas, Vice President for College Advancement.

Living in the "State of Poverty"

Lynette Andree
Staff Writer

Imagine living every day of your life wondering how you are going to survive the next. You are doing your finances and you realize that your immediate needs exceed the amount of money that you have—not to mention the needs of your children that you have not even calculated. That is how it is for many families living in America today—living day by day not knowing how they are going to make it, living in a state of hopelessness.

On November 6, a poverty simulation took place in the West Commons. This experience was designed to give students a chance to actually role-play living in the state of poverty. The families were made up of either one, two, three or four people; Each person was a given a different situation such as being a single parent or elderly person. They were given four fifteen-minute sessions, each one representing a week, to keep their family alive and functioning. Duties included paying for rent, food, school supplies, loans, utilities and getting the kids to school—they were typical responsibilities that were not unreasonable for someone with a decent job.

There were 'staffers' located around the room who were the designated people to collect rent and utilities, be the teacher, welfare office, etc. They were told to be as hard-hearted as they wanted, making it difficult for

people who were trying to survive.

At the beginning people were generally friendly, but after the first fifteen minutes people started to realize that being nice would not pay the bills. Kids were home 'sick' because they did not have the supplies for school, or a way of getting there—and more often than not parents had left their children home alone. Parents were snappy and rude because they had been standing in line all day, just to get turned away and sent home. Kids were sent to jail/juvenile hall because they were skipping school in order to pawn off valuables for money to help their parents pay the bills. By the end of the night kids were stealing from other homes and trafficking drugs to generate positive cash flow—parents were praising instead of punishing because that extra money meant that they could make it to the next month. The people who had started out as polite people patiently waiting to provide had turned into backstabbing neighbours who only cared about 'number one'—not because they wanted to, but because they had to.

Many of us have not lived in the kind of poverty that was "experienced" on Monday night. If anything, those who found themselves living in poverty came out of the experience as more sensitive to the situations of those living in poverty.

It truly gave the participants a glimpse into the struggle that many families have to deal with every month, week, and even day.

Nicaragua continued from page 1

Though Ortega has been threatened in the past with numerous allegations including genocide and unlawful relocation of citizens, he has denied responsibility for any crimes against humanity and hopes to gain a positive reputation while focusing on his new administration, which will be put into effect January 1.

Ortega says that no radical changes will be made that may negatively effect foreign relations. His main focus is currently the support of free trade, employment opportunities and close ties with the U.S. "We want to have a close, respectful relationship with the United States," said Vice President Morales. "That doesn't mean will always agree with the U.S., but it also doesn't mean we are an enemy."

URBANA06

Wanna get there?
We can help!

The mission agencies of the Christian Reformed Church have travel funds available for qualified applicants. Check out our website for the Urbana travel scholarship application. The application deadline is November 30.

Go to www.crwmm.org



Questions or Comments?

send your opinion to
diamond@dordt.edu

17 November 2006

Victory rally pep rally?

Nathan Smith
Guest Writer

A couple of weeks ago I had an experience that took me back a number of years to memories of what we called "Pep Rallies" at my public high school. Back in those days, we would cram as many students, staff and faculty into that beautiful tax-funded gym as we could, and we'd cheer and yell and dance and engage in ridiculous and often unhealthy contests (I had my limits, and drinking an entire bottle of maple syrup was beyond them).

We'd bring out male or female gladiators and celebrate their prowess and various notable accomplishments. Then we'd send them out with marching bands and tunnels of cheering dames to the battlefield where we hoped they'd survive the onslaught of demons from the opposing school with only a few broken limbs and their egos untarnished and elevated. Such were the pep rallies of my high school days.

I was reminded of these experiences on Friday, November 3, when I attended the Iowa Victory Rally at the LeMars Community High School. The marching band was there, along with the football players. The cheerleaders were also in attendance, only this time gone were the cheers of "L-I-I-O-I-N-I-S!" (I suppose for LeMars it would be "B-I-U-L-L-I-D-I-O-G-S!" which, regrettably for them is not nearly as snappy as our cheer). The cheerleaders still cheered though, only this time the cheerleaders shouted out "G-I-O-P!" "Nussle Power!" and

"U-I-S-I-A!" There were other differences as well. This time there were scads of reporters and media personnel, the student to adult ratio was tipped heavily in favour of the latter, and in general the gym was brimming over to the point that there was hardly room enough to stand.

It smelled a lot worse than I remember our Pep-Rallies ever were, and the air seemed to be filled with the mist of the sweat of thousands of people. But the people were there anticipating the arrival of the man we all had come to see, hear, maybe shake hands with, or offer our child up for him to hold (Yes, Nussle and Vander Plaats were there to speak as well, but everyone knew that they were only a sideshow).

President Bush arrived to the fanfare sounds of a Jock-Jam tune. No joke. (It was the one with the line - "You All Ready for This?!" I'm not sure of the title. Does anyone know the titles of Jock-Jam songs?) After some introductions and extensive applause, we settled into a relatively attentive reception of the President's speech.

After it had been underway for some time, I took the time to observe the crowd - the veterans, the school teachers, the excited families, the groups of school children, the rather docile and business-like media to my rear, and the young teens in front of me obviously bored and more interested with the significant other together with whom they stood tangled - arm in arm, leg in leg.

Many of them, both young and old, were all caught up in the excitement and the fervor of the event. There was talk of war, tax, freedom, and national safety. There were appeals made to God, values, and common sense. These certainly are good issues to address, but the ap-

peals felt sensationalized and the complex political issues seemed simplified.

As the rapid alternation of speech and explosive cheering/applause washed over me, I asked myself some questions. "Do the young people here understand what is going on? Are people listening to what they are cheering for? Have people examined these issues? Have we made our freedom and democracy a god? If not, why does this event seem so spiritually charged in a rather disconcerting fashion? Are rallies moral? Is this what they call unhealthy groupthink?" I asked these questions of myself, and I have not sorted out all of my answers.

I realized that whether Republican, Democrat, Green, Libertarian, Conservative, Liberal, or Bloc Québécois, most political rallies may be characterized by a kind blind zeal, but is that alright? How do we as children of God and followers of Christ respond? The president encouraged us to vote, and vote we should, but should we go out and vote blindly in a state of frenzied group think? Should we adopt a fevered nationalism? Should we surge forward in the pursuit of democracy for the world?

The Victory Rally was unsettlingly akin to a pep rally, but should the political arena become a sporting event? Is that in line with "common sense"? We must ask these questions, and we must move to answer them, but perhaps we would be best to move cautiously, with understanding, concern, and discernment - not with unchecked passions.

Placement office stuff

Jacob Kroeze
Staff Writer

Life today is online. We get recipes online, find entertainment online, post pictures online, even journal our deepest feelings online. The renewed "Placement Office" at Dordt is now part of that electronic reality.

As the "industry standards" of college placement have moved toward an electronic system, Dordt may have missed the digital wave. But along with the changes to combine the Placement office with Career Development, Dordt has now joined a server, College Central, on which employers can view all students' résumés. College Central serves over 300 small colleges, connecting college students with potential employers.

As of now, 120 Dordt students are registered on the server and 40 students have approved résumés uploaded for viewing by 67 registered employers.

Along with connecting students with potential employers, Dordt will connect students with alumni using College Central so students will have connections as they engage the world in a new community.

Students may be wary of the work that is now involved in developing a résumé without help. Ron Rynders advocates the changes saying, "To teach a man to fish is better than simply giving him a fish." The changes will require students to manage their own résumé, letters of recommendation and general credentials, while the Registrar's office

will always have students' transcripts. Ellen Mouw and Courtney Dressler review résumés, providing help while teaching the student "how to fish."

The "fishes," -- that is, graduate's credentials -- will be discarded after a time, but alumni will have the opportunity to obtain them for "nostalgic" reasons. The old résumés are out of date and it is impractical to keep them any longer.

In addition to losing all of the old credential files, some concerns exist. It could be difficult to motivate each student to register on the College Central system.

Students may also be worried about the extra work involved. Ron Rynders would like to see full résumés required for applying for all work study, resident assistant, peer counselor, and even Diamond newspaper positions. Since developing a résumé is a life-long process, the extra work may be justified as students acquire this life skill.

Finally, the Dordt community may be concerned that if students don't respond well to the new system, they may not obtain jobs after graduation. Along with this downfall, the system would then reflect poorly on Dordt's placement rate, which has been excellent in the past.

Dordt has usually successfully placed students with excellent employers, but as the world has become electronic, many employers will only look at electronic résumés. With the new office of "Career Services," Dordt rides the electronic wave while preparing capable and competent students.

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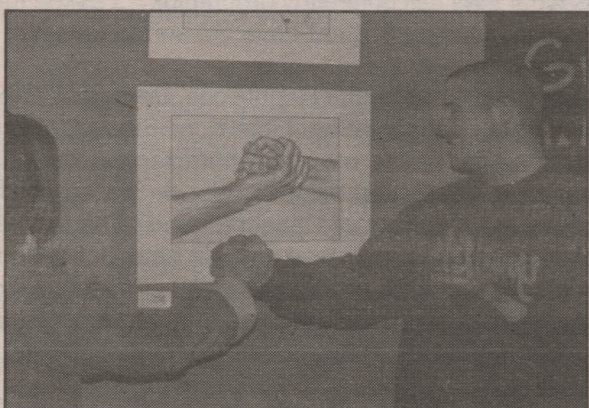
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Maggie Elhert

Students and coffee drinkers gathered at *Butlers Cafe and Coffee* for its opening last week. Art created by Dordt students hangs on the walls as part of an exhibition from the DRAWING II and III classes. The display will be up through November 28 and is open to the public audience.

Little Women: taking the stage

Grace Venhuizen
Staff Writer

An age-old story is getting a new twist this December in the student-directed play *Little Women: A Classic Family Musical*. Louisa May Alcott may not have pictured her story of four sisters set to music, but Dordt graduate Mark Du Mez and colleague Jim Hodgkinson certainly did.

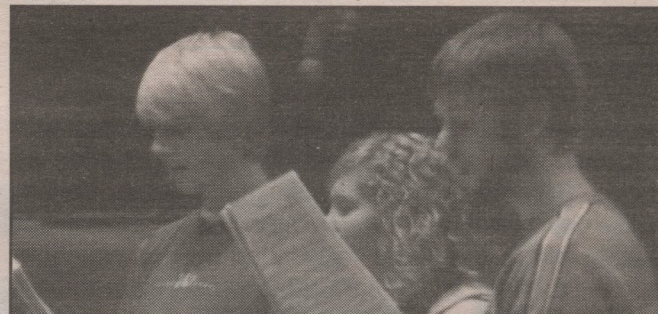
Little Women is the story of the four March sisters and the struggles they endure growing up during the Civil War era. The story has been adapted into a musical by Dordt alum Mark Du Mez, who wrote the script and co-wrote the lyrics for the songs with Jim Hodgkinson. Hodgkinson also wrote the music to the songs.

The story of *Little Women* is one many people have enjoyed and cherished since childhood. It would be sad to see such an epic tale misinterpreted. Yet, student director Amy Blok says, "With a few minor alterations, the musical stays very close to the book."

This particular rendition of the story was first performed at the Chemainus Theatre Festival held in British Columbia in Nov. 2005. The performance of *Little Women: A Classic Family Musical* at Dordt College will be the musical's premiere in the United States.

Amy Blok chose to do this particular show out of a fondness for the story of *Little Women*. Then the opportunity presented itself through Mark Du Mez suggesting the show to theatre professor Jeri Schelhaas; Amy says she saw the script and "loved it."

This musical will be Amy's senior project as a theatre major. She chose to direct because she says, "that's what I want to do once I leave Dordt." She had the chance to direct for the one-act festival of 2005 and says she "absolutely loved directing, and



Becky Love

The *Little Women* cast prepares for coming show.

knew [she wanted to] do that for [her] senior project."

The project is student-led. In addition to senior Amy Blok as director, junior Sarah Hoogendoorn is the stage manager and assistant director, and senior Amber Huizenga is the costume designer and set designer. Professor Jeri Schelhaas is advising Amy and Jim VanRy is supervising set construction.

The cast is made up of 14 people, (stretching the Dordt grade levels from freshman students to senior seniors.) These students are currently rehearsing four times a week in preparation for the show.

The play will be held Nov. 30, Dec. 1, 2, and 9 in the New World Theatre at 7:30pm with an additional matinee held on the 9th at 2pm. Ticket costs will be announced as the play approaches its performance dates.

Amy Blok thinks audience will enjoy the play. "It's a charming show and I think it has something for everyone," she says. She adds with a director's smile, "It's also a fast-paced show, so there won't be any time for anyone to get bored."

Butlers Cafe and Coffee: A community experience

Bridget Smith
Staff Writer

The sweet scent of cinnamon rises to my nose and the smell of fresh brewed coffee fills the air. The walls are a sponge paint deep brown; mahogany shelves and stone columns sit at the center of the café, and low-lit light fixtures hang from the ceiling. Soft cushioned chairs and a big leather couch sit in one corner; in another corner sits a round table secluded from the rest of the café.

All these things work together to bring about the classy yet comfortable atmosphere of the café. The authentic feel is characterized by earthy tones and artwork.

My friend and I waited in line for quite a long time, but found that the wait was ab-

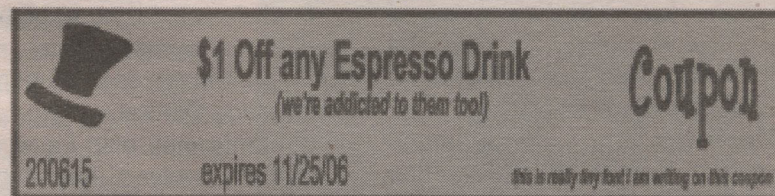
solutely worth it. While waiting we looked at clay mugs and pottery available for sale. The café also provides customers with over five shelves of books from which to choose. The books that line the shelves encompass an array of interests—*Pensees*, *The Deep End of the Ocean*, William Shakespeare: *The Complete Works*, *The Velveteen Rabbit*, *War and Peace*, *Harry Potter*, *Star Wars*, *All the King's Men*, *The Poetry of Robert Frost*.

Butlers also appeals to the varied needs of the taste buds of their customers. The café offers a selection of paninis, salads, bagels, muffins, biscotti, and cheesecakes. Butlers coffee is 100% fair trade, which means farmers earn a fair wage and there is no child labor involved.

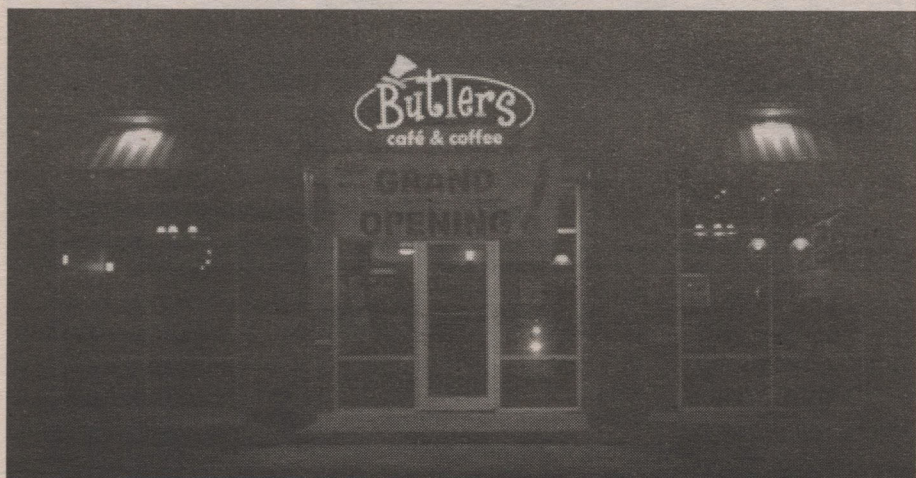
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Bridget Smith

Dordt students have their own part in the café. Currently, the artwork of Dordt students is displayed on the walls and shelves of the café. The artwork exemplifies the owners' desire to create a feeling of community.

For the time being, Butlers is one of a kind. The idea for the café was dreamt up by three brothers who sought to create a place that is "remarkable...by offering food that makes people happy through service that makes people smile. We believe in the values & fellowship of growing towns..." Ryan, one of the store owners, says they are not sure yet where they want to start more stores but

"we would like to build in small towns. We like to be a catalyst for community."

Their dream and hope seems to be coming true. I walk in the café and find it bustling with customers. Groups of ladies sit and chat, students are in the corner studying, and other people relax on the couch. Slowly the crowd dissipates and the café becomes quiet.

Butlers provides a pleasing atmosphere and possesses a wide appeal. Even with observing all this, I only got a small taste of the Butlers experience. Go beyond this title, and experience the building of a community through Butlers.

Flags of Our Fathers reviewed by Shim

Alvin Shim
Staff Writer

I recently heard a discussion about movies that were supposedly created to honour those whose lives were given in a cause or event, movies such as *Pearl Harbor*, *World Trade Center*, *We Were Soldiers*, etc. The discussion portrayed the man's view on whether the movies actually do honor the men and women involved. A couple years from now, will society remember *Pearl Harbor* as that one flick with Ben Affleck? It was with this type of question in mind—and the fact that Clint Eastwood directed *Flags of our Fathers*—that I entered the theater with high hopes for a compelling story with real, vivid characters.

The tagline is, "A Single Shot Can End the War," and the focus is largely on the photograph—of the five soldiers hoisting up the American flag. World War II or "the big one" was a time that, like most wars, is sugar-topped and forgotten within a decade. We won. That's it. *Flags of our Fathers* attempted, along with other motives, to tell the significance of that photograph and the invasion of Iwo Jima.

The three main characters were Ryan Philippe, Jesse Bradford and Adam Beach—the latter who has played almost the exact same Indian American minority character before (*Windtalkers*). They play three of the five soldiers who planted that flag in Iwo Jima. I'll say this: the battle scenes almost rivaled the opening images of *Saving Private Ryan*. But after the first minute of each war flashback, they lacked the energy and adrenaline, making me think, "Shouldn't they be less calm?" They sputtered and died as they regurgitated the same shots of the same gun exploding the same tank, the same view of the hidden machine gun firing off countless marines.

With total disregard of consecutive order, the film



Soldiers hoist an American flag at Iwo Jima in a scene from *Flags of Our Fathers*.

opens with one of the soldiers as an old man and ends by revealing that his son is writing something about his experiences of the war. The body of the movie jumps back and forth between the three characters on tour to convince the American people to buy war bonds. Theme 1: the manipulation of facts for the sake of a better story and for the sake of money.

There's one scene where the marines are being briefed about the terrain of the island of Iwo Jima (which was fascinating for the ten seconds that actor Neal McDonough monologued) where the camera gives the audience a glimpse of a handful of oppressed-looking African-American soldiers. Apparently, they were assigned the "lesser roles" of delivering ammunition. Theme 2:

racism in the U.S. Marine Corps during WWII.

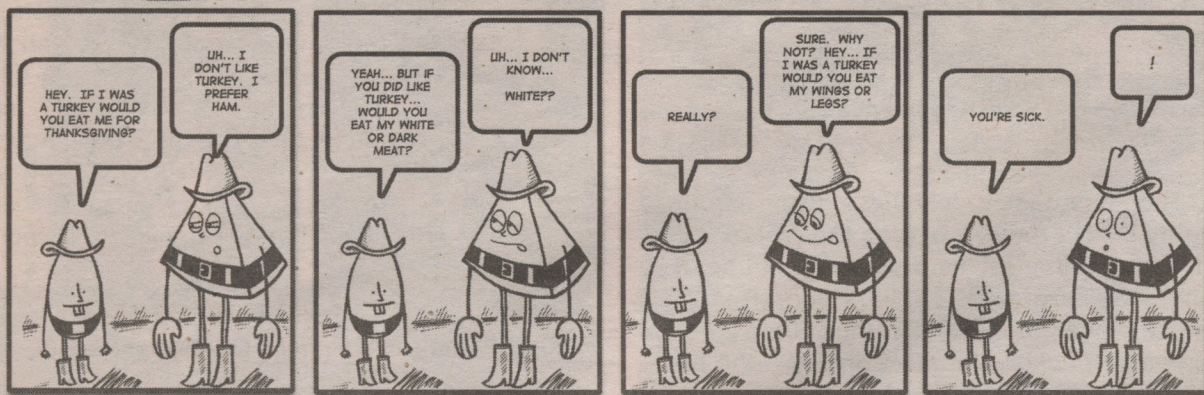
The Indian American soldier, Ira Hayes (Adam Beach) gets drunk a lot while they are on tour. He uses alcohol in a desperate attempt at escaping his shame and the terrors of war, just as Tom Cruise's character did in *The Last Samurai*. Predictable spoiler: he ends up a bum after the war and restlessly wanders the earth. Theme 3: the *We Were Soldiers*-esque after-effects of war.

Near the end of the movie, in real time (non-flashback time), the son is at his father's deathbed—at least I think it was his deathbed. Don't be so sure of that. And he says something somber and comforting to his dad who responds by saying something touching. "Son, I wasn't looking for Iggy (Who's Iggy? I have no ideal). I was looking for you!" Tear. Theme 4: father-son sentiment.

Even nearer to the end of the movie, something happened that actually took place in the middle of the time span of the film. Ten or so marines stripped off and ran to swim in the beach like buddies. Theme 5: That mysterious narrator returns with a significant voice and talks about the camaraderie of soldiers.

I don't know what Eastwood and Spielberg intended for this movie, but I'm pretty sure it wasn't this. But the bigger question is, does this film honor the lives of World War II veterans? Did this accurately tell the story? The content centered around the famous photograph of the five soldiers putting that flag up on Mount Suribachi and on the desperate struggle to sell war bonds. It wasn't a bad concept of a movie, but it was too many hours of too many things. And I'm an American (despite what many people might assume); my mind can't take in this many large ideas. Actually, I'm lying; my mind can. Yours can't. I, however, just don't want to keep track of flaccid characters and sloppy storytelling. I wish the projector for *Borat* hadn't exploded so we could have seen that instead.

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Thanksgiving at Dordt: Cartoon by Nate Gibson



Dordt basketball holding their own

Jesse Veenstra

Staff Writer

As the fall turns into the winter, soccer and volleyball give way to another season of Defender basketball. Coming off a very strong season, and a National tournament appearance, the Dordt Defender men's basketball hopes to build on that experience and make a run again this season.

The Defenders graduated three seniors last season included 2nd all-time scorer Luke Ruter, and a 1,000 point scorer in BJ Haan. However, Dordt returns a group of good players including 2 year starter Derek Keizer, and GPAC freshman of the year Scott Van Zanten. Other players hoping to have big seasons for the Defenders are junior guard Eric Van Maanen, junior forward Brian Eekhoff, and freshman Logan Kingma. Senior guard Derek Keizer said, "We have a lot of talent on the team this year. The chemistry has been great, and I think we'll grow as a team and do some very good things this season."

The season began for the men with a Friday/Saturday weekend playing Jamestown and Valley City State. The Defenders came out shaky against Jamestown and

lost 73-55. The team put the loss behind them and rebounded to a 70-67 the following day against Valley City State. Dordt took confidence on the road and took down a very good Grandview team in Des Moines. Dordt experienced an eight point lead late in the game, but a three point barrage sent the game into overtime. Freshman Logan Kingma hit a huge three-pointer and finished the game off with a couple of free-throws to earn the win. The freshman from Hawarden, IA scored a career high 27 points in the win.

The wins continued as Dordt defeated Nebraska Christian and Black Hills State this past weekend in



Scott Van Zanten, a sophomore, is expected to lead the Defenders this season.

Dordt College

the Sioux Falls Classic. The Defenders broke two previous records with their 109-32 win over Nebraska Christian; the record for largest margin of victory shattering the old record of 66 and the record for fewest points allowed in a game which stood at 37 points since 1964. Dordt then defeated Black Hills State the next day 80-61. Eric Van Maanen and Brian Eekhoff both had big weekends as they averaged 24.5 points per game and 16.5 respectively.

Currently the Defenders have a 4-1 record and will start conference play on Saturday, November 18, at Briar Cliff in Sioux City. The

Defenders are lead by Eric Van Maanen's 17.0 and Logan Kingma's 12.8 point average through five games.



Get To Know 'Em Hockey Style

Elliot De Wit

Staff Writer

Full Name: Jonathan Van Keulen
Grade: Sophomore
Major: Agri- Business
Sport: Hockey
Number: 3
Position: Defense (what else?!)
Nickname: Jonny, Gilly, Jon

Q. How good are the Blades this year?

A. Unreal, we don't settle for less...

Q. Who is your favorite hockey player and which hockey player do you most play like?

A. Alexander Ovechkin. The player I most play like is Matthais Ohlund (quiet guy on the ice)

Q. Without looking it up, how many goals did Wayne Gretzky score in the 1993-94 season while playing with the Los Angeles Kings?

A. 54?

(Answer: 38)

Q. Could I score a goal on the Blades defense?

A. Sure, why not... but can you shoot the puck?

Q. Which Mighty Ducks movie is the best, 1, 2, or 3?

A. 2



Jon Van Keulen and Kelsi Kamper pose for a photo on the ice.

Q. If you could choose one of these players from the Mighty Ducks movies to play the rest of the season for the Blades, who would you chose and why: Goldberg -- the goalie, Fulton Reed -- the big defense man/Bash Brother, Russ Tyler -- the knuckle-pucker, Charlie Conway -- the al-right player who is good friends with the coach who is kind of dating his mom which is the only real reason he plays, or Adam Banks -- the stud player who was similar to Wayne Gretzky:

A. It would have to be Fulton Reed. Adam Banks was a flake, Goldberg, well he is Goldberg..., Russ Tyler, the knuckle puck, is pretty cool I guess, but Charlie Conway has too much baggage.

Q. In 10 words or less, tell me why I should buy a Blades season pass:

A. We are the best entertainment Dordt offers on the weekend.

Q. Will the Blades win it all this year, whatever "it all" means for hockey:

A. As long as you're at all our games we should win for you, Elliot. (wink)



Jeremy Westra

Chelsea Gerdes and Jen Kempers gunning for position during a recent cross-country meet.

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